

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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COUNTRY	USSR	REPORT NO.	[REDACTED]	
SUBJECT	Medical Facilities and Health Conditions on Gorodomlya Island	DATE DISTR.	26 August 1953	
		NO. OF PAGES	5	25X1
DATE OF INFO.	[REDACTED]	REQUIREMENT NO.	[REDACTED]	25X1
PLACE ACQUIRED	[REDACTED]	REFERENCES		25X1

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GENERAL

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1. [REDACTED] 25X1
[REDACTED] The community there consisted of Germans and Soviet citizens employed at Branch No. 1 of Institute 88 on the island. The people lived in stone or wooden buildings erected to house the institute's staff. Another small community of Soviets existed in Pervoye Maya, a small primitive village on the island. This little village was separated from the institute community by a small lake on the island known to the Germans as a binnensee (inland lake). The uninhabited part of the island was swampy or wooded.
2. On an island not far from Gorodomlya Island was a former monastery which was being used as a youth prison.
3. The mainland city of Ostashkov was reached by steamer from Gorodomlya.
4. Living conditions on Gorodomlya Island were very crowded. Usually an entire family occupied only one room. Kitchens and toilets were used in common with other families in the house. A club house was open for social gatherings, but it was used primarily for political meetings and

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propaganda purposes. I do not recall that it was ever used for health lectures or hygiene propaganda.

DISEASE INCIDENCE

5. A form of malaria was occasionally observed on the island. I cannot describe the symptoms but know that it was regarded as a non-typical malaria by the people there. Typhoid fever occurred from time to time, as did tuberculosis. I recall that two cases of bone tuberculosis were reported. A jaundice was sometimes contracted by the German people.
6. Scarlet fever occurred among the children at one time. Cases of this or other infectious diseases were referred to Ostashkov for treatment.
7. Children were vaccinated against smallpox. Each year the adults received a single injection of a serum which allegedly contained immunization for twelve diseases. Because this injection was extremely painful, some of the German and Soviet inhabitants did not appear for this treatment.
8. The incidence of diphtheria in Ostashkov was high, but it was never observed among the Gorodomiya Island group. Dysentery sometimes occurred, but never in epidemic form. (I cannot identify this disease more clearly.)
9. I have no information on animal diseases. I heard of no cases of anthrax, brucellosis, bovine tuberculosis, foot and mouth disease, rabies, or other animal diseases.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

10. The institute community had a small polyclinic located in a one-story wooden building, which had about 12 rooms. The staff included Dr. KISELOVA, 55, the wife of the deputy chief engineer of the institute; Dr. VASILEVA, 35, the wife of the chief engineer; one woman dentist, and about six nurses. The polyclinic included reception, consultation, dental, and heat-lamp rooms, a small pharmacy, a room for bandage applications, and several beds for patients suffering from minor ailments. Serious cases were referred to Ostashkov. (Patients had to report to the polyclinic on the island before being eligible for treatment in Ostashkov.)
11. A polyclinic and a hospital were located in Ostashkov, but I am unable to furnish details regarding these buildings. An ophthalmologist had a clinic within his home in Ostashkov. At the hospital the physicians were not of high calibre, with the exception of ZIRULIN, the surgeon there, who was apparently very competent and well known. He was reported to have maintained a faultless surgical section.
12. I have not heard of sanitary-epidemiological stations, or of vrochebnyy uchastok. There were no feldsher-midwife stations in the city. Mothers were required to give birth to their babies at the hospital. Delivery at home was prohibited.

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INDUSTRIAL SAFETY MEASURES

13. The institute had no safety engineer, and I do not recall that safety measures were enforced. (The chemists at the institute received extra milk rations because their work was regarded as hazardous.)
14. Blood tests were performed annually. A drop of blood was taken from the finger and put on a slide, which was then forwarded to Ostashkov for study. I do not know why this test was made.

MEDICAL SUPPLIES

15. Drugs for the Ostashkov and Gorodomlya area were obtained by a nurse who obtained them in Kalinin which was the Oblast capital city. Soviet penicillin was available.
16. Roentgen apparatus was set up in Ostashkov, but, because of the scarcity of film and the sporadic current supply, it was never certain when the instrument could be employed.
17. I know of no blood donor system in operation in the area.

BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL WARFARE

18. I heard nothing regarding biological or chemical warfare plans in the area. I know of no medical laboratories in Ostashkov or on the island. However, it was generally believed that Gorodomlya Island had been the site of a veterinary-biological institute before the war. This institute had apparently closed at the beginning of the war. Old animal cages were heaped up in various spots on the island and had lain there throughout my stay.

MEDICAL TRAINING

19. A school for training in the veterinary science was apparently located in Ostashkov. I have no further information about this school.

FOOD SUPPLY

20. A great scarcity of food existed in the area until the end of 1947. Conditions improved in 1948, and food prices, particularly of bread, declined. Nevertheless, food was never available in large quantity in Ostashkov.
21. Meals usually consisted of bread, soup, and tea or water. This diet was occasionally varied when a Soviet bought a herring and a glass of vodka at a small restaurant. Otherwise food habits were very monotonous.
22. A bread made from rye flour and a white bread were available in Ostashkov. However, the type generally eaten was black, wet bread. Cabbage, or sauerkraut, was eaten at almost every meal; only occasionally were potatoes, radishes, carrots, and cucumbers available. In the winter little or no fresh vegetables could be obtained; canned vegetables were sold at these times.

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23. Milk was sold in open containers in the market place in Ostashkov. On the island farmers from Peski (or from other nearby towns) sold milk to several German women, who then distributed it to the other German families. Milk was regarded as expensive by the Soviets. The milk was probably not pasteurized, although it had a good flavor, and apparently a high fat content.
24. Fish sold in the market place included perch and pike from Lake Seliger, tench, and salmon. Lake Seliger had a large stock of fish, and fishing was a fruitful pursuit there. Smoked herring were sold when delivered to the market from other areas.
25. Meat was scarce; when available, it was very expensive. Sausages were of poor quality and spoiled rapidly. Beef, pork, lamb and poultry were all available from time to time. No refrigeration for food-stuffs was obtainable during the summer.
26. Sunflower oil was the common edible fat. Butter, lard and margarine were scarce.
27. The foodshops were never clean. The restaurant at Ostashkov was quite dirty. Although rules governing food sanitation existed, I do not know how they were enforced with respect to food shops. At the market place the quality of milk and meat were checked before being sold. I do not know what quality tests were used.

WATER SUPPLY

28. Water for the institute community houses was obtained from deep wells and directly from the binnensee. A water tower was located next to this small lake, and the water supply was piped to every house. A small waterworks was located next to the water tower, and consisted of pumps to maintain water pressure and supply. The local village Pervoye Maye obtained its water in pails directly from Lake Seliger.
29. The drinking water was not chemically purified, and the Soviet doctor ordered the German personnel to boil all water before drinking. The supply was adequate throughout the year; the pipes occasionally froze in the winter, and when this occurred the people obtained their supply from the lake itself.
30. There was no public water supply system in Ostashkov. The residents got their water from wells, or directly from Lake Seliger, in pails. Even the hospital in Ostashkov had no water supply except what was transported from the lake. Each day the patients were given a small amount of water to use for drinking and washing. This water was dispensed from one container, or basin, from which all had to drink.

WASTE DISPOSAL

31. The institute community on Gorodomlya Island was serviced by a sewage disposal system. Each house had toilets. Sewage was conducted to a settling basin on the island, from which the overflow went into Lake Seliger. To my knowledge, no facilities for the purification of sewage existed.

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32. The inhabitants of the island village used outdoor latrines.
33. Garbage was deposited in large wooden boxes before the houses. These were occasionally emptied by a Soviet crew and buried on the island.

PEST CONTROL

34. The island was plagued with mosquitoes, flies, fleas, bedbugs, and lice. DDT was available to combat these pests. In the spring, an official spraying of the houses with an anti-insect mixture was carried out, principally to combat mosquitoes and flies. Petroleum was also used for insect control.
35. There were few rats on the island, but many field mice. In the fall many of these mice were found dead in the fields, and it is possible that they were subject to some disease at that time of the year. Many cats and some dogs were kept by the inhabitants. Wolves lived in the surrounding area, and occasionally they were displayed in the marketplace by the hunter who had shot the animal. Bears were also found in the nearby woods, and bear meat was sold at the marketplace. Elk lived on Gerodomya Island, and even approached the houses when hungry.
36. I heard of no poisonous plants other than mushrooms.